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A Question of Honesty

Senator Hitchcock questions Mr. Bryan's democracy because the latter frankly announces that not being able to carry out the spirit of Harmon instructions, he will resign his position as a delegate if the state instructs for Harmon and at the same time elects Mr. Bryan as a delegate. Senator Hitchcock, looking down from his position of assumed superiority, declares that while he favors Governor Harmon, he will obey instructions and vote for either Governor Wilson or Speaker Clark if the state instructs for either. Let us examine the difference between the two positions and see which is democratic, which is in harmony with the idea of the primary, and which, if you please, is honest.

If the primary law means anything, it means that the delegate shall be in sympathy with the voters; he can not represent them with fidelity unless he is. Mr. Bryan, recognizing his inability to carry out the spirit of Harmon instructions, will therefore resign and allow them to be carried out by those in sympathy with them. This insures not only the formal but the actual will of the voters. Senator Hitchcock on the other hand, in order to secure the distinction of being a delegate, is willing to agree to cast a formal vote as instructed, but can anyone doubt that his known advocacy of Governor Harmon will nullify whatever influence he might have as an instructed delegate? What the people in Nebraska need is not merely one to vote on roll call as they direct but one who will give expression to the sentiment of the people and seek to give their will effect.

Mr. Hitchcock can only be instructed on the matter of candidate. He can not be instructed on platform, and a man who is for Harmon at heart would not favor a progressive platform, neither is he bound to represent the people after the one man for whom he is instructed is out of the race. The fight in Nebraska is between the progressives on the one side and the reactionaries on the other; the progressives are divided between Governor Wilson and Speaker Clark while the reactionaries are united on Governor Harmon. Senator Hitchcock knows this as well as anyone else. If the reactionaries can, through division of the progressives, secure a plurality for Governor Harmon, Mr. Hitchcock will be at liberty to use his position as a delegate to override the progressive majority and place the influence of Nebraska on the side of a reactionary minority.

When the voters have had a chance to compare the position taken by Mr. Bryan with that taken by Mr. Hitchcock, there can be no doubt as to which position will be indorsed as the democratic position and as the honest position.

Representative government ought to represent, and the delegate ought to be an actual representative, not merely a nominal representative of the people. Mr. Hitchcock can safely represent the reactionary sentiment in the democratic party but he can not represent the progressive sentiment. Instead of criticising Mr. Bryan for announcing his intention to resign in case Mr. Harmon receives the instructions, Mr. Hitchcock should recognize his inability to speak for progressive democracy and announce his intention to resign if Mr. Harmon is not instructed for.

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REMEMBER THE AMENDMENT

Don't fail to vote for the amendment providing for the initiative and referendum at the primaries to be held in Nebraska, Friday, April 19th. If the amendment carries at the primaries it then goes on the straight ticket. This gives it a decided advantage at the election. Do not fail to vote for the amendment! The Commoner calls upon the democrats in each precinct to organize and have at least one man at the polls ALL DAY calling attention to the amendment. It is worth giving time for. And don't forget to vote for progressive delegates to the national convention.

UNDERWOOD AND THE INTERESTS

When Mr. Bryan first pointed out that Mr. Underwood was not in harmony with the progressive sentiment of the party, he was harshly criticised by all of the reactionary members, and some progressives expressed the fear that he was mistaken in the man. Events since that time have left little doubt among fair-minded people that Mr. Underwood by constitutional bias and by sympathy as well as by environment is a reactionary. But a last year's Associated Press dispatch from Savannah, Ga., dated Sept. 3, ought to remove any doubt—if any doubt has lingered in the mind of any. This press dispatch reported William Rockefeller, a brother of John D. and his intimate associate in business, as saying that his first choice for president was Mr. Underwood and his second choice President Taft. A democrat who can make himself more acceptable to the Standard Oil company than Mr. Taft is can hardly be counted as a progressive. A man is known by the company he keeps, and Mr. Underwood's calling list was bad enough before Mr. Rockefeller's name was put at the head of it.

A BITTER EXPERIENCE

In 1904 Senator Hitchcock favored the nomination of Judge Parker, and Judge Parker was nominated. His campaign was managed by the very element that will conduct Governor Harmon's campaign if he is nominated—and what was the result? Judge Parker ran a million and a quarter of votes behind the democratic vote of 1900 and 1908. Judge Parker, lost Nebraska by over EIGHTY THOUSAND. Why invite a repetition of this experience? Progressiveness is not only right in principle but it PAYS. VOTE FOR PROGRESSIVE DELEGATES.

UNITED STATES SENATE TAKE NOTICE

The house of Lords consents to minimum wage bill—passes it without a division. It does it not because it favors the bill but because public opinion can compel it. What a pity public opinion can not coerce our senate into obedience to the popular will. But be patient, we shall have popular election of senators soon.

Governor Woodrow Wilson specifically denies the charge that has been made against him to the effect that he did not vote at the national elections of 1900 and 1908. Governor Wilson says, "At both those elections I voted for William Jennings Bryan (or rather for the democratic electors), voting the entire democratic ticket."

Harmon's Popularity

Governor Harmon's friends are urging his nomination on the ground that he carried Ohio twice—the last time by an increased majority. They ought to explain that his first victory was due to the fact that the national campaign brought out a large democratic vote and that the fight made by the special interests for Taft and Harmon gave him a majority in spite of the defeat of the national ticket.

In 1910 Governor Harmon received seventy-five thousand less votes than he received in 1908; his majority was greater, however, because the revolt of progressive republicans caused a slump in the republican vote. The total vote was over two hundred thousand less in 1910 than in 1908.

But the friends of Governor Harmon not only fail to explain the reasons for his victories but they ignore one great fact that has destroyed whatever popularity he had. Since 1910 he has repudiated the platform on which he won his victories. His platforms of both 1908 and 1910 pledged him to the initiative and referendum but in spite of his platforms he went before the constitutional convention and tried to prevent the adoption of the initiative and referendum; he tried to defeat the very men who elected him in the effort to secure control of the instrumentalities of government. Can his friends doubt that this has lessened his popularity?. Only twenty-two out of the sixty-six democrats in the constitutional convention favor his nomination. The convention, by an overwhelming majority, adopted the initiative and referendum—thus refusing to follow his advice.

If a state treasurer embezzled the money in his keeping would he be a popular man to put up for president? Why nominate a man who has embezzled power—a thing more valuable than money? He has used against the people the authority conferred upon him by those who favor the initiative and referendum. He has lost whatever popularity he had before—and his former popularity was very much overestimated.

THE DELEGATE TICKET IN NEBRASKA

The Progressive Democratic League of Nebraska and the Woodrow Wilson League of Nebraska have indorsed the following four candidates for the position of delegates to the democratic national convention at Baltimore:

I. J. DUNN.
WILLIAM H. WESTOVER,
GEORGE L. LOOMIS,
WILLIAM J. BRYAN,

The other three candidates for delegates-at-large are for Judson Harmon and would favor a platform satisfactory to Harmon and the interests that are supporting him. Champ Clark was indorsed as second choice by the Progressive Democratic League of Nebraska and the Woodrow Wilson League of Nebraska. The Commoner has not expressed a preference between Wilson and Clark. It would favor Clark in any state where Clark is stronger than Wilson. It would favor Wilson in any state where Wilson is stronger than Clark. Its desire is to prevent the nomination of a reactionary candidate, the election of reactionary delegates or the adoption of a reactionary platform.

Cut these names out and take them to the polls with you.

All persons who may have the impression that Governor Harmon has any claim to the democratic nomination on account of being a progressive democrat, should read the April issue of McClure's magazine and also study the cartoon.